

St. Peter & St. Paul
Kedington
Suffolk

Its History and Treasures

Welcome to this ancient and beautiful church

We hope that this booklet will help show you something of its many treasures. Above all, we hope that you will feel at home here in our Father's house. In visiting this sacred building, you are making a pilgrimage to the place which was built for prayer and where our Lord Jesus Christ, by His sacramental presence, makes His home.

The oldest part of the Church that you will see is the Saxon Cross standing high above the altar at the east end of the Church. This reminds us that, for over a thousand years, Christianity has been in this place. Originally, there would have been a very simple daub and wattle Church here made with wood, clay, and stone, and even mud and straw. A very simple building. Over many centuries, people have added to it, not least the Barnardiston family, of whom we will read more in this guide. Beneath that cross, when it stood in the churchyard in the open air, Christians came to worship God, as they still do today.

On the first Sunday of each month, and each Wednesday, the Eucharist is celebrated here. We hope that you will enjoy being here, that you will stop a while, consider the silence and, together with many famous people who have entered this building, including Elizabeth I, say your prayers for yourself, loved ones, the Church, and for all the people of this community who for centuries have prayed here and worshipped God.

In recent years, the community have set up a fund-raising committee to preserve the building. This spans everyone in the village, whether they are Christians or not, and they have been liberal in raising a great deal of money for the restoration of the Church Tower, from which the 16th Century bells ring out regularly to call people to prayer. Generous grants have been received from various bodies, including the Sainsbury's Family Trust and English Heritage, the Historic Churches Preservation Trust, the Suffolk Historic Churches Preservation Trust, together with many magnanimous individuals. The Parish continues to raise money towards the restoration of this building, along with several grants. These made it possible to carry out work on the restoration of the Chancel roof and some more work on the windows above the nave area.

The community has also had the Chancel decorated with lime-wash to give it a bright and cheerful look and on the altar is a new altar cloth, donated by The Russell Family, made by the Benedictine Nuns at Turvey Abbey. So another modern cross joins the cross of over a thousand years in our Church as a focus for our understanding of the crucifixion and to help us with our devotions. It is a costly and difficult task for the people of a small community to maintain this Church and therefore any contributions that our visitors can spare will be received with real gratitude. This will ensure the continuation of the work so this House of Prayer can remain for many generations of pilgrims to come and to worship.

MAY ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS AND KEEP YOU

You citizen of this village
or pilgrim from far away,
looking for some tranquillity.

Here you may become silent
at the well of all being and life.

No one is a stranger in this church
where God as loving Father
is waiting only for you!

THE CHURCH OF SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL, KEDINGTON

A THOUSAND YEARS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

– SOME LANDMARKS IN THE CHURCH'S HISTORY

There has been life at Kedington since the time of the Romans who erected a building on the site of the present church. In 1933 the remains of its foundations were excavated beneath the nave. Fragments of a hypocaust (under-floor heating system) and some Roman tiles have also been discovered. The foundations remain and two trapdoors in the nave floor enable the visitor to inspect them. In the light of this, it is not surprising that Roman tiles and bricks were used at a later date by mediaeval builders in the masonry of the walls.

By about 900 this spot had become a place of Christian worship. It was about this time that the Saxon cross (now above the High Altar) was set up. This was probably the head of an open-air preaching cross, beside which the priest offered the Mass and instructed Kedington's Anglo Saxon Christians.

During the NORMAN PERIOD a permanent church building was erected. This was mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) and the half-pier of the chancel arch survive from the Norman church, also some stones in the external masonry may have been re-used from it.

It was during the early years of the 14th CENTURY that the core of the present church took shape, built around the Norman church and gradually replacing it. This was to be a new and larger church, using the latest architectural fashions, with fine windows in the Decorated Style replacing the tiny Norman slit windows. The two-light chancel windows date from c. 1300-1310, and three "Y" traceried windows in the south aisle (c. 1300) indicate that the nave and aisles were also taking shape at this time, although the present arcades are later. The tower grew during the 14th century (its belfry windows are mid 14th century). The porch is probably also of this date.

Much work took place here during the 15th century, when some larger windows in the Perpendicular Style replaced the earlier Decorated ones in the aisles, and the east window was re-shaped. These allowed more light to enter and also gave more scope for artists in stained glass. It was at this time that the present arcades were fashioned, and the interior was acquiring more and more beautiful furnishings and decoration, culminating in the handsome nave roof, given by Lady Elizabeth Barnardiston, who died in 1526. This replaced a higher and more steeply pitched roof.

BEFORE THE REFORMATION, our church buildings served as the common people's manual of Religious Education. Few could read and fewer still were Latin scholars, but the parish church itself was a mass of visual aids, with scenes and symbols from the Bible, Church history and Christian folklore, in carvings and paintings. The windows were full of richly coloured glass and the walls were painted with murals. Several items from these times survive (albeit a little worse for wear) to remind us of the beauty that once was here. It takes only a little imagination to picture this church thus emblazoned, with priest and people offering the Holy Mass amidst the ethereal sound of plainsong, the clanging of the Sanctus Bell and the blue-grey mist of the incense smoke!

AFTER THE REFORMATION, in the 16th century, the fundamentals of the Faith remained but worship was offered in English and according to different patterns. There was less need for visual aids, so many objects of beauty were taken away and the interior was equipped to meet the new liturgical requirements. More destruction took place in 1643, when the Puritans smashed and desecrated every so-called "superstitious image and inscription" that they could lay their hands upon in the church.

At Kedington, the pulpit and Jacobean screen were installed in the early 17th century and the sanctuary panelling, rails, and altar table in the early 18th century. Various Kedington families built their box-pews in different parts of the church at different periods, supreme amongst which is the Barnardiston's manorial pew, with its own roof and two compartments, incorporating part of the mediaeval parclose screen.

This was the period of "plain and Prayer Book" worship of the Established Church, when the preaching of the Word was the climax of public worship. The congregation sat, according to their several classes, in the box-pews or benches, with the children in their seats at the back, under the scrutiny of their elders. The Manorial Family were in their front pew, with their servants in close proximity and the Parson in his wig and gown, or his lawn surplice. He read Morning and Evening Prayer from the middle-deck, and he preached from the top-deck of the commodious pulpit. Beneath him sat the Clerk, who boomed out the responses and the "Amens"! One 17th century incumbent here (although only for a year) was John Tillotson, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the gallery at the west end of the nave the singers, with a small ensemble of local amateur musicians, led the singing. Away in the sanctuary, within its rails, stood the humble Communion Table, which was used maybe four times a year. Those who wished to "take the Sacrament" occupied the Communicants' stalls in the chancel.

During the second half of the 19th century, largely inspired by the Oxford Movement, the English Church was encouraged to revive what was good in pre-Reformation architecture and worship. Churches were restored on mediaeval lines and the Eucharist began to take again its rightful priority in Anglican worship. It must be said, however, that Kedington's great interest lies in the fact that it received the minimum attention from the Victorian restorers, who threw out such things as box-pews and three-decker pulpits, re-floored with coloured tiles and often altered churches out of all recognition. We do owe much to the Victorians, however, because 18th century restoration was usually very poor patching-up (of the quality seen in the porch here) and but for their timely intervention many of our churches would have decayed beyond repair. We can be thankful, however, that they did not alter this church, but left the uneven floors, worn benches and higgledy-piggledy box-pews! The main evidence of 19th century work here is the restoration of the roof in 1845 and 1857. The 1845 work was executed by William Hill of Haverhill and involved the renewal of much of the woodwork, reproducing exactly the 16th century craftsmanship, also the removal of a dormer-window on the north side. Four bays were completed and the remaining seven in 1857.

By the 1920s, it was realised that not only was the church very badly in need of restoration, but also what an unspoilt treasure the building was and how its character should be preserved. As a result, the repairs and beautifying, which took place during the 20th century, were sensitive and judicious. The exterior of the tower was restored in 1920 under the supervision of Delmar Blow (who designed the rebuilding of Hundon Church after it was burned down in 1914). The interior of the nave and aisles was cleaned and restored in 1931, when the staircase in the north aisle was discovered, also the niche beside the chancel arch and two piscinae. This work was supervised by Mr William Weir.

Several of the 20th century furnishings in the church were influenced by the TRADITION OF WORSHIP, which was developed here. When the Reverend Barrington B Syer was Rector (1868-1909), the Communion was usually celebrated monthly (on the last Sunday) but following the arrival of the Reverend George B Perry in 1910, a weekly 8.00 a.m. celebration was instituted, with a monthly Choral Celebration and the observance of Red-Letter Saints' Days. So the seeds of a tradition of sacramental worship were sown. In 1926, the crucifix was suspended over the chancel screen. January 1929 marked the beginning of the Reverend (later Canon) William Turnbull's long incumbency. Under him, the Sung Eucharist replaced Matins once a month as the main Sunday morning service. In 1934, the east end of the north aisle

became a chapel once more; the Jacobean altar table was brought here from the vestry and the east window received its stained glass.

The Reverend Clifford Rider (Rector 1953-9) advanced the Catholic Tradition here. He gradually introduced Sung Mass as the main service every Sunday, also special Masses and Ceremonies at Christmas, Holy Week and Corpus Christi, and in the support of Walsingham Children's Home. It is strange that few weekday Masses are recorded during his time, but during the incumbency of the Reverend Peter Harbottle (1959-64) a daily celebration was instituted and the parish's links with Walsingham (who had become the Patron) were strengthened. On March 22nd, 1960, perpetual Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament was started in a new aumbry in the north chapel.

Throughout its long history, this ancient Shrine has been a place where heaven and earth meet, as the Christian Family – the Living Church – gather round the altar to meet the living Christ in his own appointed way. Much love and care have been lavished upon this building by different people of differing traditions – but all part of the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

A GUIDE TO THE CHURCH - ITS TREASURES AND MONUMENTS

People have worshipped on this spot for a thousand years, although the fabric of the present building grew during the 14th century and was altered and improved during the 15th century. The windows show mostly the Decorated (c. 1280-1370) and Perpendicular Styles (c. 1360-1540) of architecture, although some earlier stonework has been re-used and some of the masonry has been restored and renewed since mediaeval times.

WHAT TO SEE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

An important feature of a church which is often overlooked is its SITUATION and here, as in so many old churches, it is worth standing back to enjoy the building as a whole in its setting. The church stands on a ridge overlooking the valley of the River Stour, with views from the churchyard towards the modern housing on the south side of the valley and the old mill by the river beneath. It stands sedately apart from the village centre and its tower is visible for some distance.

To the north of the large churchyard stood the Hall, which was the home of the Barnardistons until 1745 and was demolished in 1780. The avenue of limes extending southwards from the churchyard was the carriageway from the manor to the village.

The church itself is one of the most interesting in Suffolk, but most of its treasures are inside, and the outside is rather unspectacular, compared with many of our great Suffolk churches. There is no such thing, however, as an 'ordinary church', and we have much to see and admire in the exterior of this ancient and unique building.

This is one of the largest churches in the neighbourhood and is about 143 feet long and 48 feet wide (across the aisles). It has been greatly altered and patched up and the effect of 600 years of British weather is evident, particularly in some of the windows, which are made of crunch – a stone that weathers easily. Despite this, we have here a building of great dignity and solidity, which exhibits a mixture of mellow colours, produced by the variety of BUILDING MATERIALS to be seen in the masonry, including pebbles, dressed stone, knapped (split) flints and brick of varying ages. Standing as it does at the extreme south-west of the county, we see here some features of Essex and Cambridgeshire churches.

The sturdy, embattled TOWER is 58 feet high. The comparatively low nave roof enhances its height and on its eastern face are marks which show that the original nave roof was much more steeply pitched. Diagonal buttresses at the west support the tower and its stone parapet has been renewed in parts with brick. Beneath the parapet are two gargoyles which throw rainwater clear of the walls, also a carved head on the eastern side. In the south-west buttress is a carved head beneath a gabled canopy and a trefoil-headed niche for a statue, above which is stone, inscribed "DAME AV IZ". This buttress has a gabled top with two carved stone heads. Very weathered corbel heads also flank the small cinquefoil-headed ringing chamber window on the south side.

A prominent south-east staircase turret, with its own external entrance, rises to the level of the bell-chamber. The tall two-light belfry windows have lost their mullions and tracery on the south and west sides; that on the north has been restored, but we can see from the original eastern belfry window how elegant and well-proportioned these mid 14th century windows were. The curious one-handed clock was made in Braintree in 1729 and its mechanism bears the inscription: "Josephus Fordham de Braintree in Com Esfuxce Horological Anno: 1729". A generous parishioner funded its restoration in 2010.

Beside it is an unusual five-lobed rosette in red brick and stone and elsewhere on the tower are various forms of flint and stone flush-work. These appear to be very early attempts at this art which, when developed, was to become a magnificent feature of East Anglian churches. Beneath the three-light west window may be seen a chequer pattern in flush-work.

The NAVE has a low-pitched roof; there is no clerestory and the AISLES with their brick parapets, contain a mixture of windows of different periods. The two-light windows with "Y" tracery date from c. 1300, whilst those with depressed (or flatter) arches are 15th century. Some windows have been restored and two in the north aisle have lost their tracery. The three-light east windows of the aisles have good Perpendicular tracery. One remaining decayed head supports the hood-mould of the very worn north doorway. Towards the east end of this aisle is a small and plain 16th century doorway, with its original door.

By contrast to the nave and aisles, the CHANCEL is noble and quite lofty. As is the case with many churches the chancel is architecturally different from the rest of the building because the Rector had the responsibility for maintaining it, whilst the parishioners looked after the other parts. The sets of tall two-light windows, with cusped "Y" tracery, tell us that it was probably built about 1300-10. The present east window replaced an earlier window in the 15th century, at which time the pitch of the roof was lowered.

There is a priest's doorway in the south side and on the buttress to the east of this is a Mass Dial, which indicated the times of services before the days of clocks. On the same buttress is an 18th century sundial. In the churchyard nearby are three good chest-tombs. That of William Phillips (1694) has a skull, hourglass, spade, pickaxe, and other symbols of mortality and that of Mrs Susan Phillips (1707) has three cherubs.

The SOUTH PORCH, although now a patched-up shadow of its former glory, is of interest. It has been much renewed with brick and its windows have been crudely re-shaped, but there is evidence that it was once very fine. The large outer entrance arch has attractive 19th century wooden gates and the rustic cobblestone floor lends atmosphere. Inside at the corners are ancient corbels which supported the original roof; the date 1751 at the summit of the roof-gable outside may indicate a restoration of the porch and possibly the date of the present roof-timbers. There is much graffiti on the window-splays – mostly writing and some of considerable age. More may be seen on the outer entrance arch and on the handsome south doorway by which we enter the church. This doorway has a fine continuously moulded arch and we can see from the sides that it

was once flanked by carved stonework, possibly pinnacles. It is interesting to note that there are two types of stone used in this doorway. Lower down in a firmer, more durable stone, whilst the rest is the lighter-coloured clunch, which has weathered more. The original mediaeval door survives, which has opened and closed to admit worshippers and visitors for at least 500 years.

WHAT TO SEE INSIDE THE CHURCH

This is one of the most unspoilt and fascinating interiors in Suffolk. It is a treasure house of ancient and beautiful things, steeped in an atmosphere of antiquity and saturated with the prayers of centuries. There is so much to see and to enjoy here – items of great age, of exquisite beauty, or of homely and rustic simplicity. The over-riding feature is that the interior has altered so little over the past 200 years and was never refurbished by the Victorian restorers. Those who have repaired and beautified it during the last century have done so with taste and care. It is worth sitting for a few minutes and “drinking in this interior”. Light pours in through the clear glass of the windows to illuminate a feast of treasures of varying vintage from 900 AD onwards. A haphazard array of benches and pews stand upon haphazard brick floors. The arcades lean outwards with age. Traces of departed mediaeval glory stir the imagination and the general look of stereotype and symmetry gives a homely feeling to this shrine, which is brightened by the judicious use of 20th century colour.

Above all, the pilgrim has much to remind him that this is a place “where Prayer is wont to be made”. It is no mere ancient monument but is where the living Church in Kedington meet and where people may feel God to be very real to them.

In the wall to the east of the entrance is a large niche for a HOLY WATER STOUP, where people dipped their fingers and made the Sign of the Cross as an act of symbolic purification and rededication upon entering the sacred building. The Holy Water, which we use for the same purpose today, is contained in a FRAGMENT OF THE PISCINE OF THE NORMAN CHURCH, opposite the entrance. This has been dated c. 1140 and was discovered in the aisle masonry in 1931. Nearby stands the large late 14th or early 15th century ironbound CHEST, which is 6¾ feet long and was the place where church and parish valuables were stored in safe custody.

Five-bay ARCADES divide the aisles from the nave. These lean slightly and as there is no clerestory, their 15th century arches reach almost to the tops of the walls. Each pier has half-octagonal responds each side and these have been painted in the 18th century to

resemble MARBLE FLUTING. Also on the piers has been carved some ancient (and sadly a little modern!) GRAFFITI. These random doodlings are sometimes of considerable interest, although they do take some finding. Note, for instance, on the pier to the east of the chest, a mediaeval ship, and other designs, also on the pier behind the pulpit, a dagger (south-east) and a human finger (north-east).

At the west end is the MUSICIANS' GALLERY (c. 1750), with a curved front.

Beneath the musicians' gallery is a modern addition. For several years, it was recognised that a WC would benefit and enhance our experiences at Kedington, and a specific "Loo Fund" was established after the millennium. Progress at first was slow but steady – bearing in mind all the other demands on our abilities to raise funds. By 2009, the balance stood at around £8,000 and we instructed our architect to draw up plans and submit costings which ran to nearly £80,000.

We began the long task of raising more funds, grant applications and official permissions anticipating that it would take many years. Then, in 2010, we learnt that we had been left a legacy of £65,000 and we were able to proceed with the project which was completed in 2011.

Our architect designed and supervised the building of a servery and full-sized toilet facility. Its presence and youth are barely discernible, and the project was forwarded for consideration of awards in Architectural circles.

The vestry is now directly beneath the tower, from which rises the stairs to the gallery and ringing chamber (which is full of graffiti – mostly ringers' autographs!) The tower houses a ring of SIX BELLS:

The bells bear the inscriptions –

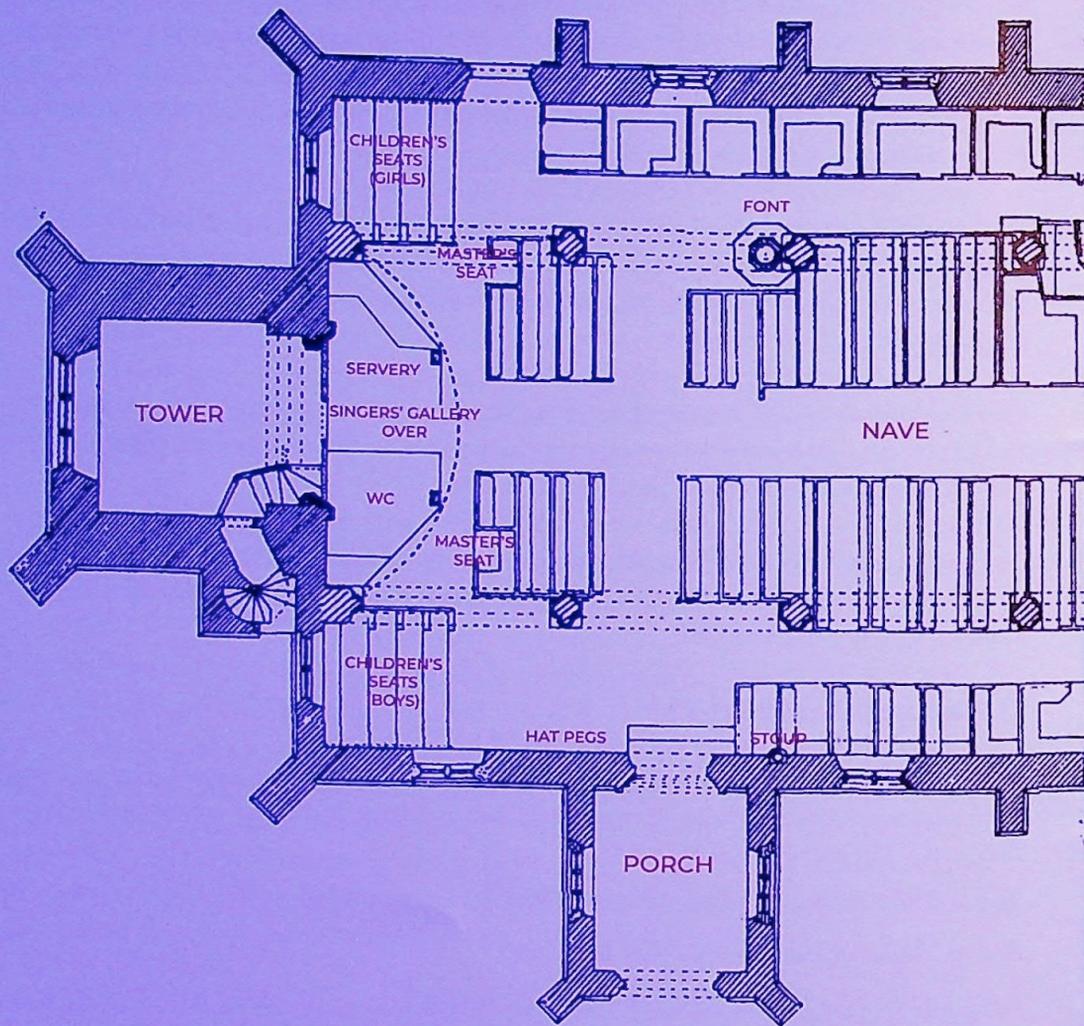
Treble: Mears & Stainbank 1779 The clock bell of 1779 was recast into this larger bell in 1936 to commemorate the 25 years reign of King George V, and the accession of King Edward VIII, January 20TH 1936

Bell 2: Thomas Mears (of Whitechapel) founder London 1838

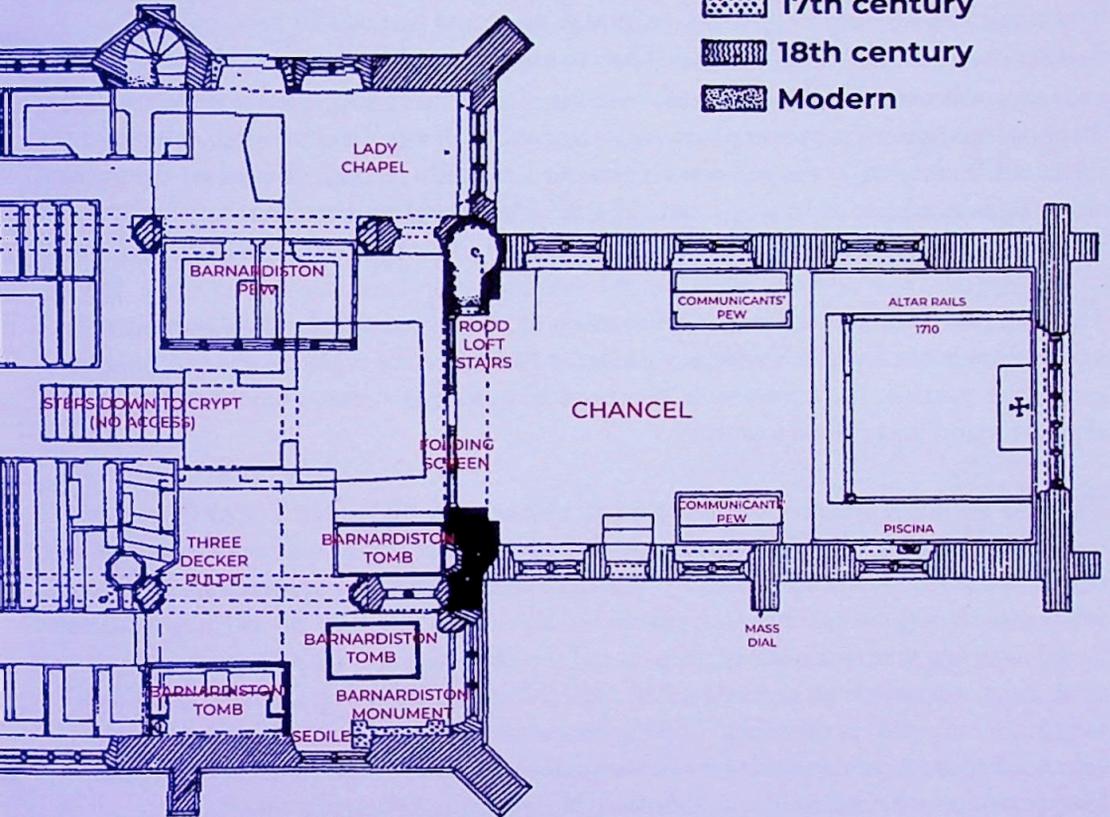
Bell 3: Thomas Gardiner Sudbury fecit 1743

Bells 4 & 5: John Darbie (of Ipswich) made me 1673

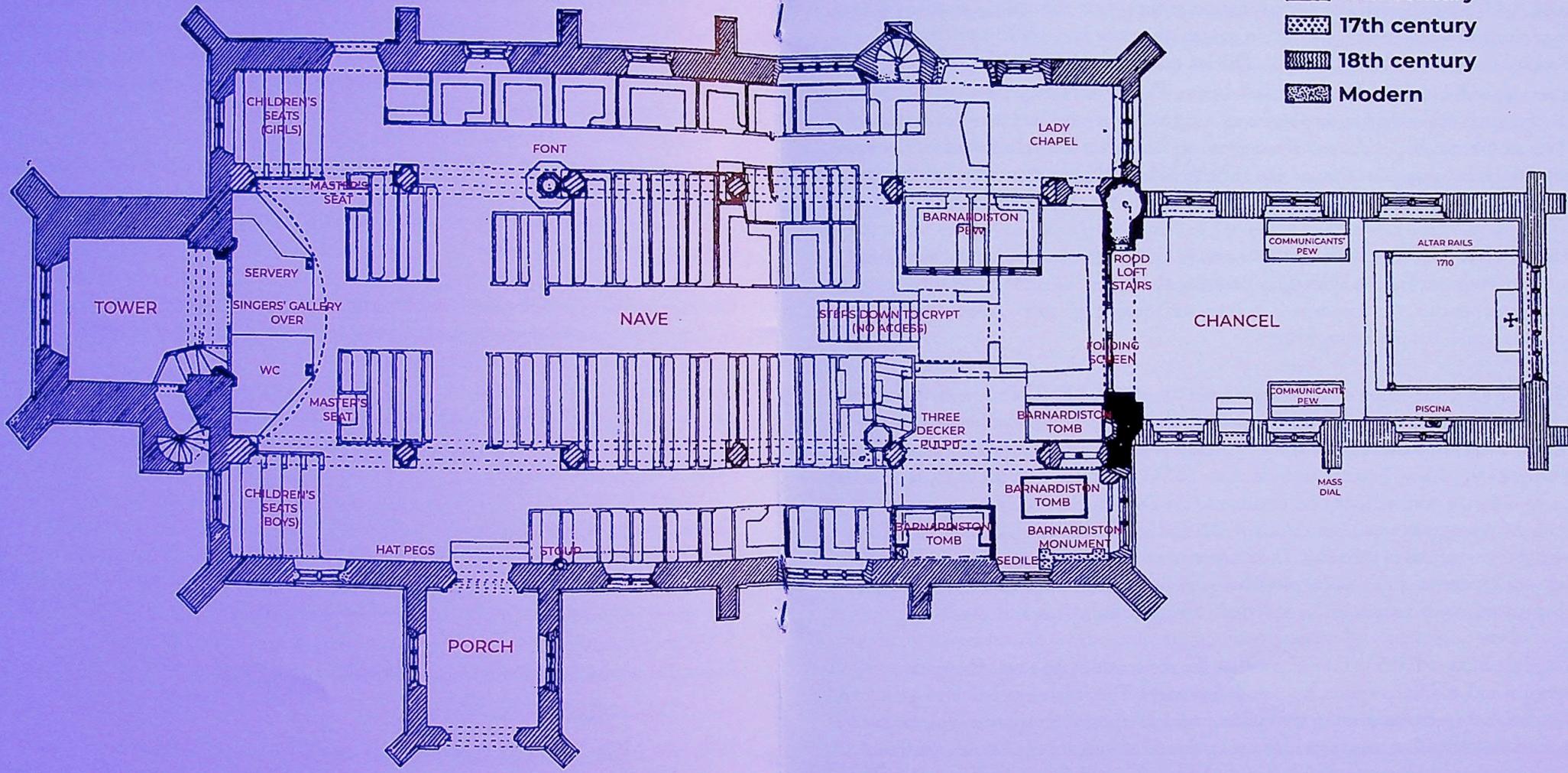
Tenor (13 cwt): John Darbie (of Ipswich) made me 1673 and when 262 years were past James Web Mills had me recast.



-  12th century
-  c. 1300
-  14th century
-  c. 1400
-  15th century
-  16th century
-  17th century
-  18th century
-  Modern



- 12th century
- c. 1300
- 14th century
- c. 1400
- 15th century
- 16th century
- 17th century
- 18th century
- Modern



The 15th century FONT is worn but still elegant. Its stem, which has traceried panels and shafts at the corners, opens out to support an octagonal bowl, which has blank shields, alternating with flowers, in beautifully carved panels. There are faint traces of original colour and at the base of the bowl are the remains of carved faces at the corners. Carved in the base step are two strange incisions, shaped like combs. Their purpose is shrouded in mystery, although similar incisions in another church were thought to be places where archers sharpened their arrows.

Crowning the nave and aisles are restored mediaeval ROOFS. The aisles have lean-to roofs, with pretty bosses, also carved cornices at the tops of the walls. The nave rood is a false single hammer-beam construction, which was given by Lady Elizabeth Barnardiston before she died in 1526. This is a most unusual design because it terminates in an almost flat summit above the collar-beams. The cornices are carved with leaf-scroll, the spandrels above the hammer-beams have carved open work and the same pattern of three motifs is carved at the end of each hammer-beam. On the arch-brace near the west are carved the names "D Midson" and "J Betts". The skylights, inserted when the roof was restored in 1857, effectively let in more light.

The SEATING in the nave and aisles is a study in itself and many churches must have looked like this before the Victorians cleared it all away, to be replaced by their regular pitch-pine benches. Here we have a "hotchpotch" of seating – often crudely made, altered around, and pieced together!

The main set in the centre of the nave are late 15th century BENCHES, with flat-topped ends, carved with linenfold. Behind these are very plain and crude-looking mediaeval benches; here the woodwork is really worn and warped and has acquired a shine. The westernmost of these benches each side have SMALL COMPARTMENTS, with seats facing inwards, where the Master (south) and the Dame (north) could keep a wary eye upon the youngsters who sat in the CHILDREN'S SEATS (c. 1750) which rise in five tiers at the west end of the aisles. These are an unusual survival and have side balustrades, the boys also having metal hat-pegs on the south wall. In the south set has been placed a 17th century BIER, for conveying the coffin at funerals.

There are BOX-PEWS in the aisles and on the north side of the nave. These are irregular and of different sizes, heights, and vintages. They were erected during the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries by the families who occupied and maintained them. It appears that several of these pews have been altered and adjusted, often using former woodwork, and adding new panels here and there. Some of their doors have interesting hinges of varying designs.

A much less obvious part of the church's seating is the SEDILE beneath the window adjacent to the Barnardiston monument. This was a seat provided originally for the celebrant of the mass and his assistant.

Few churches in England can boast of such an intriguing array of seating accommodation. It is fascinating – even if maybe a little uncomfortable.

The most comfortable seats of all were in the handsome MANORIAL PEW, built by the Barnardistons about 1610, with Jacobean panelling and arches on three sides and its own wooden ceiling. There are two compartments, each with its own door, book-box, and hat-pegs. The south side of this pew is much earlier woodwork and was part of one of the PARCLOSE SCREENS which separated the eastern chapels. It is thought that this woodwork may have been fitted between the two easternmost piers of the south arcade (i.e., where the back of the Barnardiston pew now stands). This beautiful example of the mediaeval woodcarvers' art made about 1430, stands 14 feet long and 10 feet high, its five bays having openwork tracery in their upper parts and double traceried panels in the base. Professor Tristram removed three coats of paint in 1931, revealing what remains of the original 15th century colour. The tiny carvings in the spandrels flanking the tops of the arches in the base panelling are well preserved and reward examination.

They show (west - east):

Birds; Little faces, with beards and hands at the comers; Foliage; Dragons; Foliage; Birds looking backwards; Faces; Dragons; Faces with hair stretching into the corners; and Foliage.

The THREE-DECKER PULPIT is early 17th century, with fine characteristics Jacobean carving. In the Clerk's Seat behind are HAT PEGS and in the front nave pew nearby is a WIG-POLE. Six steps lead to the top deck, where the sermon is delivered, to the south of which is an HOURGLASS STAND on a turned pole. Above the pulpit is a canopy, or tester, which prevented draughts and projected the preacher's voice outwards.

On the north side of the centre aisle, fastened to the floor, is a reproduction 15th century ALMS-BOX (the original was stolen in 2003), bottomed with iron. This was probably used for "Peter's Pence", for dispatch to Rome.

The small NORTH AISLE DOOR may well have been the private entrance for the Manorial Family. Beside it is a fragment of a WALL PAINTING, reminding us that the walls were probably once covered with such pictures. Other remains of murals may be seen in the church, particularly beside the partly hidden niche to the south of the chancel arch and on the south aisle wall. Nearby is the doorway to the STAIRS WHICH LED TO THE LOFT ABOVE THE PARCLOSE (ROOD) SCREEN. Their upper entrance is behind the monument above.

The small Chapel here has a reproduction of the church's early 17th century COMMUNION TABLE (again, the original was stolen in 2003) the predecessor of the present High Altar, which is beautifully carved. Beneath the east window is the RECESS for the mediaeval altar. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the AUMBRY (cupboard) to the north, installed in 1960 by Faith Craft, to the designs of Lawrence King, in memory of Canon WH Turnbull. To the south is the place where the Sacrament of Absolution is given. The colourful EAST WINDOW here (in memory of Mrs Margaret Turnbull, who died in 1948) was designed by J Nuttgens and shows the risen Lord, flanked by the two Marys who came to the tomb and the Angel who told them that Jesus had risen.

Access to the nave from the Chapel is by means of an OPENING, with remains of tracery at the top and a wooden lintel. This may be contemporary with the north doorway and the wall seems to have been originally pierced by a TWO-LIGHT OPENING similar to that in the corresponding south wall.

To the north of the chancel arch is some 17th century PANELLING and in the wall to the south, partly hidden by a monument, is a NICHE for a statue, beside which are the remains of another WALL PAINTING.

In the wall, flanking the chancel arch, may be seen a projecting STONE and the remains of another. These may have supported part of the Rood complex. The carved and painted rood screen (now completely disappeared) spanned the nave, wall to wall, above which was the rood loft, along which it was possible to walk. The ROOD LOFT STAIRCASE (discovered in 1920) is in the northern jamb of the chancel arch – an extremely unusual position. Above the loft stood the great Rood (our Lord on the Cross, flanked by His Mother and St John), reminding the congregation of the central fact of the Faith. The present HANGING CRUCIFIX was designed by Mr G Jack of Finchley and was installed in 1926.

What remained of the old screen was doubtless removed when the present folding JACOBEOAN SCREEN was made in 1619. This is unusual and has pleasant decoration at the top of its openings. It is the third oldest dated Post Reformation screen in England and may well be the only folding screen of the period. The responds of the CHANCEL ARCH are Norman (dated by some authorities c. 1140) and may be a pair remaining from four which supported a former central tower.

The CHANCEL is light and airy. Architecturally it is an early Decorated period piece of c. 1300-1310. Its graceful SIDE WINDOWS have internal shafts, also the EAST WINDOW, which once had a steeply pointed arch like the others, but in the 15th century it appears that the chancel roof-pitch was lowered, and the five-light window was given a new depressed arch. The scanty fragments of blue glass are all that survives of the MEDIAEVAL GLASS which once filled the windows. A visitor in 1631 noted that in a south window of the church could be seen Thomas and Elizabeth Barnardiston with their sons and daughters. This glass was later taken to Brent Eleigh Hall and is now lost. Other windows contained the Barnardiston Arms in glass.

The CHANCEL ROOF incorporates ancient timbers, but it was greatly restored in 1760, which date, with the initials "US" appears in one of the tie beams.

There are two late 18th century COMMUNICANTS' PEWS which were made for the chancel, to accommodate the people who were to make their Communion.

Behind a pair of doors (cut in 1932) on the south side of the sanctuary is a quatrefoil PISCINA drain, beneath what must have been a very beautiful piscina niche. We can see that its canopy has been hacked away (doubtless to accommodate the panelling), but its arch has an intricate and unusual design. Into the drain was poured the water from the washing of the priest's hand at the Mass.

The 18th century fittings are an interesting survival. The WAINSCOTING around the sanctuary walls is of this date, also the three-sided COMMUNION RAILS, in the style of Wren. Samuel Barnardiston, who died in 1707, bequeathed £50 for their erection and they are believed to be among the finest of their period outside London. The ALTAR TABLE and the marble SANCTUARY FLOOR are also 18th century. Three painted panels, executed by Professor Tristram in 1935, form a REREDOS and add a welcome dash of colour to the sanctuary. They show Our Lady and the Holy Child flanked by St Peter with his keys and St Paul with his sword. These replaced the LORD'S PRAYER, CREED AND COMMANDMENTS, painted in 1861, which are now on the north aisle wall.

Above the reredos now stands the church's oldest treasure – the ANGLO-SAXON CRUCIFIX (C. 900 AD), which shows Our Lord reigning in glory from the cross.

MONUMENTS

The church is unusually rich in monuments of various periods, which have earned for it the title of the “Westminster Abbey of Suffolk”! Several of these are superb examples, beautifully sculpted, their effigies forming interesting records of period costume. These memorials are also a record of people of the past who have been a part of Kedington and its church. The inscriptions give details of these folk, making interesting (and sometimes amusing) reading.

Most of the memorials commemorate members of the Barnardiston Family, who were Lords of the Manor of Kedington from the 13th century until 1745. They took their name from the village which lies about two miles to the north of Kedington, where they settled at the time of the Norman Conquest. They were known as “de Barnardiston” until c. 1475. The FAMILY TREE OF THE BARNARDISTONS, with their Coats of Arms, may be seen in one of the box pews in the north aisle.

The monuments and other memorials are as follows: -

Chancel, north (west – east).

- 1) Thomas and Ann Barnardiston (he died 1704). A good wall plaque, with cartouches and urns at the top and cherubs at the bottom.
- 2) Anna (1814) and Maria Blongfield (1812). They were sisters.
- 3) The Revd Barrington Blomfield Syer. (Rector 1869-1909.)
- 4) One side of what was probably a table tomb. It has four shields and is part of the monument to Sir Thomas and Ann Barnardiston. (1542 and 1560.)
- 5) Sir Samuel Barnardiston (1707). He lived at Brightwell Hall, near Ipswich, where he is buried. He was reputedly called a “Roundhead” by Queen Henrietta Maria in 1641, thus originating the term which was applied to the Parliamentarians. It was he who left

£50 for the altar rails, as the inscription on this rectangular wall plaque, crowned with two obelisks, records.

6) Wall plaque to the Revd William H Syer (1868) and his son, Richard (1867).

7) Ledger slab in the chancel floor to Elizabeth Partridge (1729).

8) Wall plaque to the Revd Barrington Blomfield Syer (Rector 1840-44) and his wife Elizabeth.

9) North of the chancel arch. Wall plaque, with large shield above, to Thomas Barnardiston.

10) South of the chancel arch. Fine tomb chest, upon which lie the effigies of Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1619) and Lady Elizabeth (1584). He wears plate armour, his hands are placed together, his head is supported by a plumed helmet and his feet rest upon a two-tailed lion. Lady Elizabeth wears a long dress, with a girdle around her waist and her purse hangs to the level of her knees. His head (which has an Elizabethan cap) rests upon a tasselled cushion and her feet rest upon a dog. Both effigies have characteristic Elizabethan ruffs. On the north side of the tomb chest are their five sons and three daughters. On the wall at its east end is a plaque, with three shields.

11) South aisle, east end. A fine tomb chest, with shields in quatrefoils in the sides, supports the recumbent effigies of Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1503) and Lady Elizabeth (1526). It was she who built the nave roof. He is dressed in plated armour, with a skirt of chain mail. He is clean-shaven and has straight hair down to his shoulders. His feet rest upon a bittern with huge claws. She wears beautiful clothes and an elaborate headdress. This couple is also commemorated on a Pardon Brass at Great Goates, Lincolnshire. Their inscription here is on a plaque, with three coloured shields, four crosses and two crescents, on the adjacent wall.

South aisle, south side (east – west).

12) A fine wall monument, showing the effigy of Miss Grissel Barnardiston (1609). This elegant young lady kneels at a cushion. Beneath is an inscription which is worth reading, informing us that Grissel was “too wise, too choice, too old in youthful breath. Too deare to Frendes, too much of men desier’d, Therefore bereaft of us with untymely death”.

13) Large wall monument and tomb chest, surrounded by a wood and iron palisade, to Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1610) and his two wives, Mary (1594) and Katherine (1632). This is a superb monument. In the tomb chest is an arch, from which protrudes the end of a coffin; flanking it are shields. On the tomb lies Sir Thomas in plate armour, with a lace collar and close-fitting cap and Katherine has a large ruff and a headdress with a long veil. There are shields with Coats of Arms on branches in the centre and foliage down the sides at the arched recesses. Each side has a marble pillar. A large Coat of Arms may be seen at the summit of the monument and at both ends are sets of three skulls. Sir Thomas' helmet and gauntlets may be seen above. A further inscription above the coffin commemorates his son, Sir Nathaniel and Jane his wife, whose monument is in the north aisle.

14) Sophia, Viscountess Wimbaldon, and Widow of Sir Edward Cecil (1691). She was mother-in-law to Sir Thomas Barnardiston. A good wall plaque, with weeping putti.

15) John Goodchild, killed at Anzac in 1915.

16) Cedric Rowlandson. Killed in action with the RAF in 1942.

North aisle (east - west)

17) A fine wall plaque, with two skulls at its base (one has an open jaw) to Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1698). There are two cherubs and two putti, one with a flame and the other with a skull. The Latin inscription is flanked by drapes.

18) A superb wall monument, with eight shields and a winged skull at its base, and garlands down the sides. Backed by three cherubs and drapes are the half-figures of Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston (1653) and Dame Jane (1669), their hands clasped together on a skull. Above are the arms of Barnardiston impaling Soame, flanked by two flaming arms.

19) A wall plaque with two urns containing flowers at the top and two putti, to Sir Phillip Skipton (1691), whose second wife, Ann, was the daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston.

Between the nave arches are ten BARNARDISTON HATCHMENTS. A hatchment is "a funeral demonstration of the lifetime "achievement" of the arms and any other honours displayed on a black lozenge-shaped frame which used to be suspended against the wall of a deceased person's house. The word derives from the early French word "achevement". It was usually placed over the entrance at the level of the second floor, and

remained for six to twelve months, after which it was removed to the parish church. The practice developed in the early 17th Century from the custom of carrying an heraldic shield before the coffin of the deceased, then leaving it for display in the church.

They commemorate –

South side (east – west):

- 1) Nathaniel Barnardiston (1837)
- 2) Thomas Barnardiston (1704)
- 3) Viscountess Wimbaldon (1691)
- 4) Sir Samuel Barnardiston
- 5) Lady Ann Barnardiston (1701)

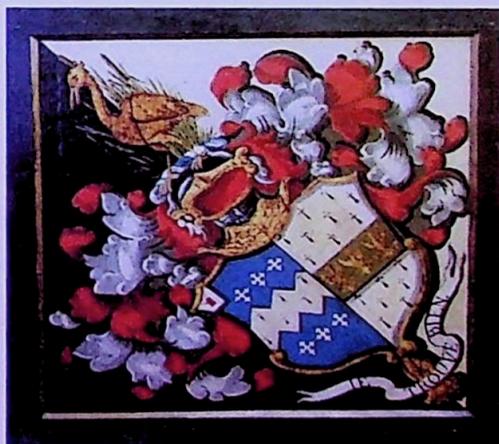
North side (east – west):

- 6) Lady Ann Barnardiston (1671)
- 7) Sir Robert Barnardiston
- 8) Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1698)
- 9) Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1700)
- 10) Sir Thomas Barnardiston (1669)

Thanks to a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the hatchments underwent a thorough restoration programme in 2013 which made a dramatic improvement:



Before



After

A trapdoor in the centre aisle near the pulpit gives access to a flight of steps leading to the BARNARDISTON VAULTS which extend north, east, and south from a small central chamber at the foot of the steps. These vaults contained 54 coffins of the Barnardiston Family, including some inscribed with names of people commemorated on the monuments. Some of the lead coffins have been fashioned in the exact shape of their occupants. It is thought that the oldest of these may date back to the 16th century. The coffins have now all been placed in one section of the vault, which has been duly sealed.

Sir Samuel Barnardiston (memorial No 5) is buried in a vault in Brightwell Church, near Ipswich. He was the first Baronet of Brightwell and died, aged 88, in 1707, without issue. Brightwell's interesting little church contains four Barnardiston hatchments, including Sir Samuel's, and a wall plaque to his nephew, Arthur, also some pieces of Barnardiston armour, including a crested helmet and gauntlets.

Amongst the church PLATE, (which is in safe-keeping and not on show to visitors) is a cup, inscribed "For the Parish of Kitten 1664", also a paten, both of which were given by John Tillotson, who was Rector here for a year and was later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. The parish is still known locally as "Ketton" or "Kitton".

THE CHURCH PROTECTION MARKS - ENGLISH GRAFFITI

Throughout the 16th century and continuing to the early 19th century, the belief in witchcraft and the supernatural in Europe was widespread. Fear of evil spirits and their malign influence generated a need to protect property leading occupants, owners, and visitors to carve protective symbols otherwise known as apotropaic marks as graffiti onto structures like houses, barns and in some instances caves to dispel ill spirits. In most cases you will find these marks etched around entrance and exit points such as windows, doors, and fireplaces though the positioning of these marks is not an exact science.

Churches feature most protection marks as there was a genuine need to make them a safe place for the surrounding community given the great scale of congregation at any one time. All through the church, protection marks are exhibited in detail with many varying shapes and symbols. For example, the pentangle, shaped like a star with straight lines connecting to five points with no exit. Demons were not seen as particularly clever creatures and were thought to always follow a straight line to see where it led. It is said that demons following these lines would become trapped leaving them spinning on the walls without end.

Symbols such as hexafoils, otherwise known as daisy wheels with their six petaled flower design are commonplace too, though some undoubtedly scribed by medieval masons with their compasses.

Other symbols you may see upon the fabric of the church include mesh marks, crosses, butterfly crosses, singular or overlapping circles and repeatedly the letters VW or inverted to AM which are gathered to reference the Virgin Mary and the calling upon her protection of the location.

It is worth noting that not all etchings found on the church walls and pillars are for protection purposes as some are seen to be more devotional in nature and some the meaning still left unclear. For instance, there are several etchings depicting ships on the pillars of our church, and it is suggested that these could be prayers for safe passage or longing for a ship's return. Additionally, you may find portraits, swords, animals, and a whole host of other scribings, with their meaning remaining unclear, but their significance not.

For further information on this church, scan:



For further information on the Christian faith, scan:



This guide was originally written and produced by Roy Tricker, a visitor to the church, who gratefully acknowledges the excellent earlier Guide by Canon WH Turnbull, from which much information has been gleaned and from which the plan of the church, by P G M Dickinson, was first produced. Additional text from Father Christopher Giles, Isaac Betts and Mary Upton has since been added. Cover photograph by Laura Chittock. This edition updated by Paul Davis. V5C22

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God
Christ
Resurrection
Welcome
Joy
Disciple
Grace
Bless
Crucifixion

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Praise
Jesus
Reconciliation
Grief
Forgiveness
Baptism
Silence
Apostle
Trinity
Church
Eucharist

Resurrection
Faith
Praise
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